

Inheritance

by AdalineSnape

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Summary: Do you believe someone has a choice in being light or dark? Do you believe your ancestry matters? Question Hermione Granger thought she knew the answer to, until her seventeenth birthday at least. Follow Hermione's story as she navigates a new life, struggles to keep hold of her old one and becomes one of the most powerful and influential witches the wizarding world has ever known.

1. Chapter 1: Happy Birthday

****Chapter One: Happy Birthday****

Do you believe someone has a choice in being light and dark? Do you believe your ancestry matters?

_There was a time in my life that these were simple questions; there was only one answer and I would not have heard another argument. That was before I turned 17. See, for muggles 17 has no real significance, but in the wizarding world, one gains their independence, for many purebloods it the time they gain their full inheritance. It is also the day one reaches their full magical capabilities, since the ministry tracker drops and allows full use of magic; it is only bound so that accidental childhood magic doesn't end in mishap. It should be the best day of a young witch or wizards life. My 17__th__ birthday should have been a simple day with time well spent with friends and looking forward to finishing my final year of Hogwarts. Instead the day was the beginning of the most confusing, heart wrenching and thrilling year of my life. _

***** One Year Ago â€" September 19****th ****(morning) *****

"Up, up, up! You're seventeen!" Ginny squealed as she jumped up and down on Hermione's bed.

"Nngh, Gin" the brunette said as she sleepily pulled the toppled covers back up to her chin.

"Come on Hermione! The boys are downstairs waiting for you and you've already got packages in the great hall!"

"Packages?" Hermione mumbled but sat up a little more intrigued.

"Quite a few actually." Ginny said with a tilt to her head.

"Hm." Hermione hummed, her interest piqued. "Alright then, off with you so I can get dressed."

With that Ginny hopped off of Hermione's bed and sat on Lavendar's as the older girl dressed for the day. "Not that top Hermione, it's your birthday, try to look like you're trying a little."

"Well if it's my birthday I should be able to wear whatever I like, shouldn't I?" Hermione said with a grin. Ginny gave a harrumph but smiled. "Guess you're right. Besides, I want to see what you've got!" Ginny finished as she grabbed Hermione's hand and pulled her out of the girls dormitory and down the stairs to where the boys waited in the great hall.

"Happy Birthday 'Mione!" Ron said, leaning in and kissing her cheek lightly, holding up a small package in the other.

"Thank you, Ronald." She said with a grin. "Should I open it now?"

"Up to you. You've got loads more, ruddy owl tore my hand up when I was trying to take the pouch from him."

Hermione peered down, interested in the numerous tiny boxes that sat at her breakfast place. They had clearly been shrunk down so the owl could carry it, all except one that is. She stared at the package, ribbons, bows, no letter attached or anything signifying who had sent it. She waved her wand over the package, quickly identifying that the object inside had significant magic attached to it but nothing that was harmful. Carefully she unwrapped the plain brown paper from the small box, slid the top off and picked up the carefully folded letter. She let out a light gasp at the pendant that lay beneath the letter.

"Wow, Hermione. Who sent you that?" Harry said as he leaned further across the table.

An intricate silver pendant lay nestled in the box. The tree of life splayed across the pendant with small emeralds glinting as if leaves. Hermione could feel the magic rolling off of it before she'd even touched it. She felt pulled to it, completely captivated by it. Without realizing she reached forwards and smoothly ran her fingers across it. As she touched it she gave out a gasp and her friends all took a sharp intake of breath. The tables of the great hall fell silent as every witch and wizard in the room felt a force of magic wash over the room. Those at the Gryffindor table began whispering intently, pointing towards the Head Girl, and it quickly spread throughout the great hall until each and every person was staring intently at the girl.

Hermione sat entranced in the pendant, her fingers lightly stroking

it, eyes closed and head tipped back just slightly. The oddity, however, was that her hair billowed back as if the wind was caressing it and she shone with a silver hue. With everyone preoccupied by the girl, no other house noticed the confused looks on many of the Slytherins faces. No one noticed the eyes of Severus Snape clearly trained on the girl, his brow creased in what could've been concentration or worry. As the man pushed back his chair and rose, the room erupted into chaos as Hermione Granger disappeared with a loud 'pop'

"Welcome"

Hermione spun on her heel and froze. With a sharp intake of breath she took three quick steps backwards from what one could questionably consider a man.

"Don't be foolish, I know you're smarter than that. If I meant you harm you'd either me screaming on the floor or dead at my feet already." Voldemort said eyeing the girl in front of him.

She straightened herself and tried to calm her breathing. "Then what is it you want?" she said with an even tone, that by no stretch represented the terror she was feeling.

"Merely to say hello. As is the nature of who I am, I could not deliver the gift to you personally." He said with a light wave of his hand to the pendant she still held.

"Gift? From you? But why?"

"Did you not read the note my dear?" he said warmly. _Warmly_, she thought, _what was happening? Voldemort wasn't warm._ She took another slight step backwards, hoping it came across as a nervous shuffle and eyed the room around her for an escape route. She looked down at the note that was firmly gripped in her other hand and opened it.

_A family heirloom for you on _

your seventeenth birthday. Passed

from one Gaunt to the next for generations.

"Family heirloom? That doesn't explain anything."

"Doesn't it? Think Hermione, I know how smart you are."

"But- it can't be possible."

"Ah, how naïve you are after being kept under Dumbledore's thumb your entire life my dear. Sit, let me explain." He said as two chairs popped into existence. Hermione stood board straight, staring directly at him, unsure of how to process his insinuations. She took another step back, towards the only door in the room. "Sit, Hermione. Now." He commanded. The chair jerked forward, hitting her in the back of the knees and forcing her into the chair. Her body trembled slightly; she hoped he hadn't noticed. She hoped he didn't see the terror and confusion as it wracked her body.

"You were born September 19th, 1979."

"I know that."

"But not to muggle parents. Your parents worshipped you Hermione; they wanted everything for you. You look much like your mother in her youth actually, as well as her temper, but it has become apparent throughout the years that you inherited the power of your father. A true Gaunt through and through."

"I don't understand. Gaunt? The last living Gaunt was your Mother and her brother had no siblings. You also had no siblings, she died giving birth to you and you can't—" She trailed off, running through every scenario in her head. It couldn't be. He was deformed, his soul torn into pieces, was he even considered human at all?

"I'm impressed that you know your family history."

"I learned everything I could about you during fifth year." She whispered, her thoughts consuming her.

"Is it clicking into place yet, Hermione? All of the feelings of never fitting in as a child, as if something were missing. The unexplainable power you came to Hogwarts with; trained so easily for one so young. The brightest witch of her age is what they call you, if I recall correctly. The pull, that thirst, for knowledge, Hermione. You want it all, just like me, your father."

"No." she whispered. "No." this time she said it a little stronger, her voice still quiet to her ears. "My parents are Daniel and Jean Granger, they're muggle, they're dentists."

"No, Hermione. Those people raised you, admittedly they seemed to do alright even with their hindrance of being muggles and for that, and your obvious attachment to them, I will permit them to remain alive. However, they are not your parents."

"I don't—I don't understand."

"I'd imagine not, I recognize this may be confusing for you but you must know. When I was temporarily hindered in 1981 —"

"You mean when you tried to murder my best friend?" she said calmly.

"Yes. As I said, when I was hindered, your mother attempted to go into hiding. She, unfortunately, was caught and you were taken from her. Rather than be given to your god parents, you were given to muggles. It is to my understanding that your powers were bound when you were taken, so as to hinder you as incapable as a muggle."

"Then how did I go to Hogwarts?"

"It seems as if the binding did not take; I would assume your accidental magic as a young child was much too strong to be controlled."

She sat there, stunned and unable to focus. It couldn't be true—could it?

"Why now?" she asked.

"You are seventeen. At 3:21 this afternoon you the tracer from the ministry will drop, as will the bind that all magical children have. As soon as that drops you will, legally, come into your inheritance."

"Inheritance?"

"Part of it took place this morning, as soon as you touched the crest." He said indicating to the pendant in her hand. "It will become public knowledge by the evening post, Hermione. You must prepare yourself for what that will mean for you."

"This is all too much! I don't believe you butâ€¦!"

"But why would I lie? Why would I want a filthy mudblood to think she was my daughter? This will be hard for you to accept, but you will not have a choice once it is known."

"But you could stop it! I know you control the Prophet, you could keep it out of the press!"

"That's correct."

"Then do it."

"No, Hermione. It is time to accept your place. Besides, at best I could keep it out of the prophet but within a few days other publishers would pick up the story. Every inheritance is tracked and ministry workers talk. There will be no hiding from this."

"What do you want from me? Why even tell me?"

"Want from you? I want my daughter back. I want you to be the witch that you should have been raised to be."

"You've been back for years, why now?"

"Would you have believed me without proof?"

"I don't believe you now."

"Exactly. When you have questions this afternoon, send an owl." Without any further explanation Hermione felt her head swirl and then her feet connected to the ground beneath her."

"Ms. Granger." She heard behind her. She turned to see Professor Snape standing at the edge of the Forbidden Forest, only a few feet from where she stood.

"Professor?" she murmured, before dropping down to the toppled tree beside her. She dropped her head into her hands, her head swimming.

"Are you alright, Ms. Granger?"

"Did you know?"

"Know?"

"That he was going to take me this morning?"

"Yes."

"That's why you're here then?"

"Yes."

"So it's true then?"

"Yes."

"Can't you bloody well say anything but yes?!" she screamed out at him. Her Professor stared back at her, his expression blank and unreadable. "Oh gods, I'm sorry sir. I don't know what's come over me, I shouldn't have shouted."

"It's alright Ms. Granger, you've had a â€" excitable morning." He replied, his face still blank.

"What am I to do?"

"Currently I'd ask that you follow me to the Headmasters office." He turned on his heel and took a few steps forward, Hermione standing and slowly following behind. He turned back, "Take this as well, should help to calm your nerves." He said as he handed her a vial of what she recognized as calmly draught. Before she could say thank you he was stalking back towards the castle, cloak billowing behind him.

Professor Snape rapped his knuckles against the large wooden door as the gargoyles slid back into place to cover the entrance behind them.

"Good morning, Severus, Ms. Granger." Headmaster Dumbledore greeted as the two stepped into his office.

"Morning Headmaster." Hermione replied and Professor Snape simply grunted a response, taking a seat in one of the wing backed chairs across from Dumbledore's desk. "Have a seat, Hermione. Oh, lemon drop?" he asked, pushing the bowl across his desk, towards her.

"No thank you, sir."

"Pity, I find them quite relaxing myself."

"Get on with it, I don't have all day to be here."

"Yes, yes. So, it's to my understanding that you spent the last hour having a discussion with your father, correct?" Dumbledore said, as if it were the most normal thing in the world. _This man has lost his mind,_ Hermione thought, _he's completely nutters. Great Hermione, you're thinking like Ronald â€" am I also nutters then? _She shook her head and straightened up in the chair.

"If what he said is true."

"It is, Ms. Granger. Only about a week after he was defeated, I placed you into the care of your muggle parents."

"Why did you take me?"

"I hoped you could live a normal and fulfilling life as a muggle. Minerva found a muggle couple who had been unable to conceive for years and we hoped it would work out. Unfortunately the binding I placed on you did not fully take and, here we are."

"This is quite a lot to take in, Headmaster."

"Of course, of course my dear. Alas, we are here and you will have to learn to navigate this confusion quite quickly."

"What am I going to do?"

"It's quite simple my dear - Do you believe someone has a choice in being light and dark? Do you believe your ancestry matters?"

_**Authors Note: First chapter up! I've got the first few chapters completed; I'm just going through and editing them now. I'd imagine this fic will be somewhere around 40k words when I'm done. At this point I'm unsure whom I plan to pair Hermione with long-term but it will be either Draco or Severus. Let me know what you think!

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2. Chapter 2: She's Who!

**Hello! I'm so overwhelmed by the amazing responses! Thank you! I know everyone has an opinion on who they want Hermione to be with and after sketching out where I'd really like to take this fic, I will actually be pairing her with both Severus and Malfoy throughout it! I'm not sure who she will end up with in the end, who knows maybe both (as some suggested), but there will be both Draco and Severus action! I look forward to reading everyone's reviews and can't wait to see what you think of this new chapter!**

Chapter Two: She's Who?

_These were confusing and challenging times. Connections I had had all of my life were falling apart around me, new connections were popping up each day and my friendsâ€¦oh my friends. I look back on these early days of last year and all I remember is the pain. Being shunned, ridiculed, attacked and worst of all, abandoned. _

*** One Year Ago â€" September 19****th**** (afternoon) ***

"I don't understand." Harry said staring back and Hermione.

"To be honest Harry, I don't much understand myself."

The boys sat across from her in their dormitory, Ron refusing to look up and continuing to stare at the floor and Harry staring blankly at her, unsure what to say next. After all, his best friend had just told him she was the daughter of Voldemort. The man who they had spent their entire young adult lives attempting not to be murdered by, the man who killed his parents, the reason Sirius was dead, the reason his life was constantly flipped upside down.

"I can't do this right now. Let's just talk about it later." Harry said, running a hand down his face. "We'll see you at dinner Hermione." He finished up.

"Are you sure? I'd be willing to talk â€" she stopped as Ron interrupted her, the look on his face blank and hard.

"He said we'll discuss it later. Go, Hermione."

"But Ron â€" "

"Get out." He ground out.

Hermione stood quickly and bolted from the room, careful to keep her composure until she reached the girls dormitory. The last thing she needed was more people intrigued with what was going on with her, after all in just a few short hours everyone would have some sort of opinion on Hermione Granger. She tossed herself onto the bed, sniffing slightly but refusing to let the tears fall. _They're just boys and they're upset, rightfully so. I can't even wrap my head around it so how can I expect them to?!_ She continued to run through scenarios in her head until she drifted off to sleep.

"What was her response, My Lord?"

"What do you think her response was Bella? Shocked quite obviously. Years, I've had years that she's been under Dumbledore's thumb. All that she's missed; all that I should have been teaching her. Everything I could've shown her to shape her into the witch she is destined to be." Voldemort hissed out, causing Bellatrix to bow her head lower.

"Did she ask questions?"

"Yes Bellatrix."

"And?"

"She asked no questions of her Mother if that is what you are asking. Now get out, you have the information you're interested in."

"Yes, My Lord."

Hermione stretched her arms out and quickly stilled before remembering the silencing charm around her bed.

"Do you believe it?"

"Not really, it can't possible be true?"

"She's a muggle born! Her parents are dentors or something like that, right? Besides, why would we just be hearing about this?"

"I don't know, she's certainly smarter than any muggleborn I've ever met."

"Lavender!" the other girls in the room gasped.

"That's not what I meant!" the girl backtracked quickly, "it's just, it doesn't make sense. She's so much better than everyone else and

her parents didn't even teach her magic! I came to school knowing a number of spells and it took me forever to master any of them. She walks in here and day one she's doing everything right. It would just make sense, you know? To be You Know Who's Daughter, he may be evil but even Dumbledore has said how smart he was."

"He has?"

"Yes! I know these things, Ronniekins told me everything that the Headmaster used to tell Harry and him." She said. Hermione could almost hear the girl turn her nose up at the end of the sentence, attempting to come across entirely more important than she was.

Hermione picked up her wand and cast a quick tempus " 8:10pm flashed into the air quickly before fading. Blast! She'd slept through dinner. Although, perhaps this was a good thing? If she spent the remainder of the night tucked into her four poster bed maybe she could maintain a sense of normalcy for just a few more hours.

"Of course, if it isn't true, it's awfully odd she wasn't at dinner. Seems like she's known or at least knew before it was published. I'd be hiding to. If those documents are published tomorrow I'm going to go right to the Headmaster and demand she be removed from the dorm! I won't sleep in the same quarters and You Know Who's Bastard, she could murder us in our sleep!" Lavender squealed out the last part causing Hermione to wince. She continued her wince as the room filled with the rest of the seventh year girls agreements. Maybe I should have said yes to the private rooms, Malfoy be damned.

Son,

You have been instructed to see that no harm come to over the remainder of the year. While our Lord knows she is capable, he believes her house will quickly turn against her and lash out in true Gryffindor nature. I should also mention that it would benefit the family greatly should you begin to build a friendship with . Make no mistake, everything published tonight was fact and our Lord will severely punish those who question her legitimacy.

~ L. Malfoy

Draco stared down at the parchment in his hand, contemplating the words scrawled hastily by his father. Keep her safe? Befriend her? Obviously his father had gone completely nutters and did not know Hermione Granger. That girl could look out for herself. Draco huffed and set down the parchment, he had an eerie suspicion that if anything, he was going to be spending his final year of Hogwarts ensuring that the golden girl didn't get herself expelled if someone came after her. She was hell with a wand and had an even meaner right hook.

Hermione stared at her blank journal page. What could she possibly write? My father is evil. My Headmaster may not be any better. My mother! My mother_, she thought to herself. Only now did Hermione realize that in all of the commotion she had not stopped to figure out who her mother was, she hadn't even thought to ask. She peered out from behind the curtain of her bed, hearing the quiet snores of the girls in her dormitory. Quietly she shuffled out of bed, grabbing her robe and tossing it over herself before slinking out of her dorm

and then out of the common room.

She began her walk to the owlry but then halted after only a few short strides. _No, Hermione, that would be a horrible idea. At least he's the only one who has been honest with you. Or perhaps he's simply been the most stable?_ Regardless of her thoughts, she turned herself around and quickly walked the opposite direction before she could change her mind.

She stalked right up to the door and wrapped her knuckles three times. Right as her knuckles connected the third time the door wrenched open.

"What, Granger?" Severus Snape said in a low snarl.

"I need to speak to him."

"And you thought you'd simply go for a midnight stroll and use me as your errand boy?" he ground out.

Only now did Hermione take in his slightly rumpled and bleary eyed appearance, or bother to take note of the time.

"I â€" well you see, sir."

Snape made what one could only comprehend as a growl before pulling his body back from the door and motioning for her to come in. "I'm quite sorry sir. I guess the time got away from me."

"Yes, well, I was expecting this, I only assumed it would be a little earlier in the night."

"I fell asleep."

"Well at least one of us will be rested for class tomorrow." He said as he pushed through another door that Hermione could only assume were his private chambers. She stood there, waiting for a few seconds before she heard his voice echo through the lab, "move Granger, you're wasting my time; I haven't got all night."

She scurried into his room and quickly stepped over the fireplace. "Am I to go through?" she asked hesitantly.

"Obviously."

"On my own?" she said, her voice only now betraying her nervousness, since her bravado of storming down to the dungeons had left her.

"Honestly, Ms. Granger. If he wanted you harmed it would have happened earlier, or have you forgotten that he snatched you right out of Hogwarts without our knowledge just earlier today?"

"Well no, of course not sir."

"Then step into the grate so I can get this over with and move on with my night or get out." He bit out.

"Yeâ€"yes, sir." She said, eyeing the fireplace once more before quickly stepping into it.

Severus grabbed a handful of floo powder and quickly tossed it in with a shout of "Malfoy Manor" echoing behind her and she felt her feet leave the ground.

"Young mistress!" she heard someone squeak out. Hermione coughed slightly but quickly composed herself as she stepped out of the fireplace into a beautiful sitting room.

"It's just Hermione. I'm looking for â€œ"

"I is knowing who you is looking for young miss! Right this way!" the elf squeaked and then scurried towards the exit, snapping her fingers and causing the double doors to open widely.

"Welcome to Malfoy Manor, Ms. â€œ" Lucius Malfoy trailed off, "well, I'm quite unsure what to call you actually."

"Ms. Granger will suffice." She said with much more confidence than she actually felt.

"For now, right this way Ms. Granger." He said, making to grab her hand and tuck it into his elbow but Hermione jerked her hand away as if she'd been burned. She made sure to stay a few steps to his left, not wanting the man to think his 'politeness' was actually welcome. _Ugh,_ she thought to herself, _is this what I'll have to put up with if I want to visit him? Will you want to visit him?! Well I do have questions, butâ€|he's Voldemort! He's been trying to kill you for years. Kill me? Not particularly, but kill Harry? Well, yes. Right Hermione, he's only been trying to murder your best friend! Well Dumbledore didn't do much better with me and no one is calling him a mad man! _

Hermione shook her head quickly, trying to clear her mind from yelling at herself. The last thing she needed was people thinking she was going loony.

"Through here. The Dark Lord shall be with you in a few moments."

Hermione stood in the large room, her eyes trained to the snake curled up in the corner by the roaring fireplace. At this point the snake had not moved, but Hermione was not willing to take a chance and kept her wand tightly in her hand.

"She won't harm you."

Hermione visibly flinched at the woman's voice behind her. She turned to face the woman, taking a slight step back and keeping her hardened grip on her already drawn wand.

"Come now little one, lets be nice and get to know one another." Bellatrix said in a light, almost friendly voice, her head tilting to the side making her curls tumble over her shoulder.

Her curls.

He frizzy, never controlled curls.

Hermione froze as she stared at the woman in front of her. This

crazed, barely there individual that Hermione had seen torture others. This woman, who had tortured her friends' parents into insanity.

"Are you her?" Hermione choked out.

"What was that love?" Bellatrix said, a smile ghosting across her face.

"Are you her?" Hermione said a little louder.

"Am I who?" the woman said, her grin growing wider.

"My mother. Are you my mother?"

At that Bellatrix jumped into the air unexpectedly and clapped her hands. "Oh goody! I kept hoping this day would come! I've dreamed of it for years, but Our Lord said I mustn't, that I had to wait until the right time. This must be the right time now that you know! I remember you, do you know that? You were so little, so fragile when I held you. I thought I'd drop you, I thought I'd hurt you but she just kept telling me that I would be fine." Bellatrix said stepping forward, the smile she had marring her face into a look of complete insanity. The woman took a step closer and only then did Hermione realize she had backed herself into a wall. The woman reached her hand up and brushed Hermione's hair from her face, "so longâ€|" Bellatrix whispered, "you look just like her."

"Whaâ€|" Hermione started before the booming voice of Voldemort bounced off of the walls.

"Bellatrix! Desist."

At that the woman jerked back and threw herself to the floor. "I'm sorry my Lord! I couldn't help it; I had to see her. I walked by and she was just standing â€|"

"Silence." He hissed. "Get out, I will deal with you later." The woman picked herself up and scurried quickly from the room, not even risking a glance back and the clearly distressed young girl.

Voldemort sighed heavily and sat in the chair before the fireplace, Nagini quickly curling herself into his lap.

"Please, come and sit Hermione."

She didn't fight the request and simply set herself in the chair, her eyes staring blankly into the fireplace.

"What did she tell you?" he asked gently.

"Enough."

"And?"

"It's hard to digest. She's, well, she's crazy. She's not even stable. I can't believe I'm saying this but who would have guessed that of my two parents, you would be the stable one! You're a mad man!" she cried loudly, clearly unable to maintain her composure any

longer.

"To address the least concerning statement, I know that you have been raised to believe I am a madman, and perhaps I am, but do not believe that I am any worse than those you have been serving since coming into the wizarding world, Hermione. You know nothing of your mother, how could you have already come to the conclusion that she was unstable?"

"Haven't you seen her?! I know that Bellatrix may pass as normal amongst your ranks but she is most certainly not a stable individual!"

"She is also not your mother." He said, a look of understanding replacing the previously present confusion.

"Well sheâ€¦ she isn't? Then, I don't understandâ€¦ what was she talking about? She kept saying she'd been waiting so long, speaking about holding me as a young child."

"She did hold you when you were a child and yes, I have been preventing her from seeking you out for years. She has even disobeyed me on many occasions to seek you out, once even saving your life."

"What?"

"Your fifth year, the Department of Mysteries. Dolohov, unaware of your heritage, shot a very deadly curse at you. Had Bellatrix not deflected it, you would be dead."

"Butâ€¦ I don't understand. If she isn't my mother, than why would she protect me? Why would she have been seeking me out for years?"

"Because she is your sister, Hermione."

****Author's Note:**** Hope you like the slight cliffhanger! I'll have an explanation of parentage next chapter and will spend some time delving into Bellatrix as a character! Hope you enjoyed it!

3. Chapter 3: Family Ties

****Note:** The timeline of Voldemort and Hermione's mother is most likely slightly off but I tweaked it to make it work! Hope you enjoy it! Also, I realize that Voldemort is somewhat OOC and that will probably continue for a while but it won't stay that way. This chapter turned away from analyzing Bellatrix's character and so I took that part out and decided to put it into the next chapter because I think it's a fairly important piece! Any, hope you enjoy!****_**

****Chapter 3: Family Ties****

"Carina Longbottom was born in 1935 to Callidora (nee Black) and Harfang Longbottom. She was found to be pregnant at 16 and so, in seclusion, gave birth to a little girl. The Blacks do not believe in removing anyone of magical abilities from their bloodlines and so the little girl was given to Cygnus and Druella Black to raise as their

own and to preserve Carina's character for marriage."

"And that little girl was Bellatrix?"

"Yes. She was raised with Andromeda and Narcissa as if she was their sister and in all of the ways that matter, she was. Very few people in the pureblood community even know that Bellatrix was not their daughter, but it is clear that she is a Black and so it was never questioned."

"Alright then." Hermione sighed. "So Carina, she's my mother then?"

"Yes." Voldemort responded tightly.

"How did I happen then? It was decades later that I was born."

"I met her at Hogwarts. I had gone to request the Defense Against the Dark Arts position and I quite literally bumped into her."

"Why was she there? She wouldn't have been a student." She said quickly doing the math in her head.

"She was visiting a good friend and was on her way out as I was leaving, having been turned down for the position. I knocked her down and kept going. She shouted after me, very unlady like to shout after a man in those times. Once she realized who I was she simply shook out her robes, said good afternoon politely and then told me I ought to watch where I was going."

Hermione observed Voldemort as he spoke about meeting her mother. He was far away, as if replaying the memory in his head. The look on his face, however skewed his features may have been, was a look Hermione had never expected to see. Fondness. She was unsure if she would use the word love, but there was a clear fondness for the woman he spoke of.

"There were very few people at that point who did not immediately cower and bend to my will. She intrigued me and so I had my followers find out more about her. This, of course, was when I discovered she was related to one of my most devoted families."

"But she was also a Longbottom, surely that meant something."

"Ah, Hermione, naivety does not suit you. Do not mistake your interaction with the current Longbottom family to define their entire claim. The Longbottoms are part of the sacred 28 and as such hold great value in the pureblood community, in the wizarding community. Augusta Longbottom is now their head of family but at the time, Carina's family was very devoted to my cause. Harfang Longbottom was a proud pureblood; if he were alive today, he would rival Lucius Malfoy when considering pureblood politics."

"And so the story ends where her family handed her over because you decided you'd like to have her and then somewhere down the line I came along; lovely." Hermione spat bitterly, letting her disgust at the pureblood righteousness show through.

"Not quite right, her family did attempt to 'hand her over' as you put it, but the missing piece to your story was the fight she put up."

There was no bending your mother's will. Make no mistake Hermione, she was not a dark witch, she was not one of my followers. If your mother were alive today, she would be fighting for her beliefs, she would be ruling beside me. I was not always as ruthless as how others portray me to be, no more than others are when fighting for the cause they believe in."

"I need to leave." She whispered.

"I apologize, you are right. It is very late and I am sure this information is overwhelming to you."

"Yes." She said standing and moving towards the door, "wait, before I leave, can I ask you one more thing?"

"You may always come to me with questions, Hermione."

"How did Bellatrix â€" well, how did she become so unstable?"

"That is a question you should pose to your Headmaster." And with that Hermione felt her body pushed lightly through the doors, and heard them click shut behind her.

"Young mistress is ready to leave?" the elf said as she popped into existence.

"It's Hermione."

"Of course young mistress Hermione." The elf squeaked, causing Hermione to sigh.

"Yes, I'm ready to leave."

The next morning Hermione woke the buzz of the girls in her dormitory. Bleary eyed she sat up and began preparing for the day. Everything from the night before buzzed in her head, shouting to be worked through and acknowledged. She squinted as one of the girls opened the curtains, the sunlight streaming brightly through the window. None of the girls acknowledged that she existed, going so far as to talk back and forth with one another, simply staring right through her!

She breathed a heavy sigh and set off for the great hall. She knew the day was going to be terrible when the common room went silent as she walked through. She reached the portrait and as she stepped out she felt a light tug at her hand.

"Harry." She breathed out, stress that she did not fully realize she was carrying, lifting from her shoulders.

"I'm sorry about yesterday. When you didn't come to dinner and didn't come to the common room after, I realized that my being dismissive must have hurt. I'm sorry I reacted that way, it was a lot to take in, but after thinking, it must be really difficult for you. How are you holding up?"

She smiled at him before throwing her arms around his neck and letting out a sob.

"That well, huh?" he said sheepishly, rubbing his hand up and down

her back in an attempt to help her calm down.

"I just, well â€" she trailed off, stepping back and quickly wiping the tears from her face that had overcome her at Harry's confession. "Yeah, it's difficult. There's so much, so much more than just my parentage. I don't even know what's going on Harry; so much has been thrown at me and I don't know whom to trust anymore."

"Well, I'm not sure how much help I'll be sorting it out but, you can trust me Hermione, I'm always here for you, just like you are for me. Come on, let's go in." he said holding out his hand to her as they approached the doors to the great hall.

"Okay." She said, taking in a large breath and letting it out in hopes of relaxing herself. She stepped into the great hall and walked towards the Gryffindor table, Harry leading the way.

"Not a chance Harry! That, that, thing, isn't sitting at our table. She doesn't belong here." Ron said standing up and using his body to block their normal seats.

"I'd like know more about why you made the decision to bind my powers." Hermione said, head held high in an attempt to show she would not be intimidated.

"That is not why we are here ." Dumbledore said, his hands folded, perched on his desk.

"That does not change that I would like answers. The other day you simply dismissed my feelings, dismissed the role you played, that you chose to play, in attempting to devastate my life."

"Binding your magic would not have devastated your life, simply changed it."

"My magic is my life Headmaster, I'd have thought that you of all people recognized that. I cannot imagine my life without magic."

"Precisely why I binded it. I could not have Tom's child repeat his mistakes, to crave power the same way he did."

"And what of Carina's child? Did you give no thought to her? From what little I've pulled up from her time at Hogwarts she was a shining example, a perfect Gryffindor, regardless of who her family was."

"Ah, I see he told you of your mother then."

"Yes, he did. However, I'm still unsure why you never told me."

"Carina was a wonderful student, very intelligent, a leader in her house."

"So as a small child you simply assumed I would be like him?"

"As a child you were already very much like him, Hermione. Once Tom had been destroyed I looked into the rumors before making a choice. You had begun showing signs of accidental magic when you were only

hours old, by the time I met you, you had a control over your childhood magic that most children never even reach before they begin Hogwarts. You were too great a risk."

"And now? Am I too great of a risk now? Why not just kill me? Why not bind me a second time before I received my Hogwarts letter? Why let me in the building near your precious Harry Potter if you assumed I would be dangerous? How dangerous have I been when I've been saving him year after year?" Hermione shouted the last part, slamming her hands down on the table, her hair crackling with her magic.

"I did." The man stated simply.

Hermione's body stiffened. "Did what, precisely?"

"Attempt to rebind your magic. Your name reappeared on the Hogwarts roster only a few years after we had placed you with your parents. I went to the home and rebound your magic. The same thing happened around the age of nine, however it went unnoticed and, here you are."

"How could you?" The girl said, not comprehending how her Headmaster, a man she had looked up to her entire time at Hogwarts, could be saying the things he was to her.

"I was doing it for the safety of the wizarding world, Hermione. It was a choice I made."

"It was not your choice to make! What if my parents had been cruel? What if they had shunned me for my magic, what if they had beaten me because they thought I was the devil? You knew that you were putting me at risk! You knew you were taking away everything from me."

"But they did not. You arrived at Hogwarts a well round, respectable young lady who has grown into a lovely young woman, should you choose to stay this way. It was for the greater good."

"It wasn't your choice to make Dumbledore. And should I choose to stay this way? So now, because I have not developed into an evil, power hungry child, you believe I have a choice? Where was that belief years ago when you were binding my magic repeatedly?" She spat.

"I will not continue to repeat myself Hermione, I made a choice for the light."

"Making choices you aren't qualified to make. Stealing children from their families, raising them in your image to become your well trained little soldier. You are no better than Voldemort." She hissed before turning on her heel and storming from the room, her magic crackling behind her.

"She is too powerful now that the tracker has fallen away." Dumbledore said, his hands cradling his head as he leaned on the desk before him.

"She has always been a powerful witch, Albus. We've known that, nothing has changed."

"Everything has changed, Minerva. The girl is angry! She is on edge,

confused and angry with us for keeping everything from her."

"Do not pull me into this Albus. I was very clear where I stood on your decision. I told you, excuse me, begged you, to simply allow me to raise her. Instead you made us place her with muggles. I told you when she arrived that, after her first year and what transpired, that we should tell her then. I said the same things during her fourth year and you refused. I will not take part of the blame, this is solely on you."

"You know why I made the choice."

"And I know it was wrong. If this falls apart, if Hermione abandons Harry, abandons us, the fault will lie with you."

"She is so much like him."

"To a point but she is very much like Carina."

"You are blinded by your friendship, Minerva. Carina was not all good."

"None of us are Albus." The witch said. Before taking her leave she turned back around, "if you let today go unpunished you will push her away from us. Ronald Weasley needs to be addressed." And with that she left.

Dumbledore sighed, unsure how to address the youngest Weasley boy and his meeting with had already gone terribly. The fight in the great hall had left many terrified of the girl, her dorm mates already requesting that she be moved because they "feared for their safety". He stood and stepped over to his pensieve, pulling out his memory from the great hall earlier this morning so he could take his time to digest what transpired.

"_Not a chance Harry! That, that, thing, isn't sitting at our table. She doesn't belong here."_

"_Stop Ron," Harry responded, "I've talked through everything with Hermione."_

"_Nice for you! I don't want this traitor sitting at our table! She's no Gryffindor!"_

"_Stop it, Ronald. I know it's confusing, it's confusing for me too, but let's just go outside and talk it through." Hermione responded, clearly trying to keep her calm._

"_I wasn't talk to you, you filthy whore."_

"_Ronald, just stop -" _

This is where the entire memory had to be slowed down. Ron Weasley pulled his wand up and aimed it at Hermione, who simply tightened her grip on her wand but did not draw.

"_Knock it off Ron!" Harry shouted, pulling his wand up and pointing it at Ron._

"_You're going to protect her?! Her father wants you dead! Her father

murdered your parents! She's - she's his daughter, Harry!"_

_That was when Ron cast the spell. Harry was stunned and as Dumbledore slowed down the memory it was clear that there was no way Harry would have cast quick enough to protect himself. He focused on Hermione, her hand only giving a slight flick as a protego shield appeared so quickly and so forcefully that it tossed Ron roughly fifty feet across the great hall, landing and sliding down the Hufflepuff table. _

The great hall was silent, all staring, some intrigued, some terrified, others simply shocked, as Hermione Granger stood with the hue of the spell emanating from her skin, no one having heard her cast the spell and the pendant that had been tucked into her pocket floating in front of her face.

"_Ugh -" Ron groaned from across the hall, effectively breaking the silence._

Some students jumped up and scurried from the hall, others continued to stay seated.

Ron Weasley stood up from the table, face bright red and clearly raised his wand but an "Expelliarmus" was heard through the silent room. Everyone turned to follow the wand as it landed in the outstretched hand of Draco Malfoy.

"_Enough Weasley."_

"_I told you, Harry! She's just another death eater whore now." And with that he stormed from the great hall._

Dumbledore sighed as he pulled his head from the pensieve. It was quite obvious that Ron Weasley had been the only aggressor in this fight. At this point he was not even sure if the girl had cast the protego or if it had been the pendant, tucked into her pocket until the spell was cast towards her. _But what to do with Ron? The boy was simply troubled, hurt and confused with the new change. He had clearly cared for the girl before and this must have been upsetting to him. He needed to speak with Ron, they could not afford him pushing Hermione closer to Tom. _If nothing else he needed to wrangle the boy in when considering that.

"He did nothing."

"At all?" Harry asking, shaking his head slightly in disbelief.

"He pulled Ron in for a chat and then just let him go. No detention, no punishment at all! He attacked us! That's grounds for expulsion!"

"We don't want him expelled though, Hermione."

"I know that!" She said deflating a little, "but do I really mean that little to Dumbledore now? All because of something that he already knew?! Ron attacked me, verbally and physically, and Dumbledore didn't even make a move to stop it, Harry. He just sat there and watched, and then let Ron walk out of the great hall without so much as a comment to him."

_Son, _

Out Lord is pleased that you stepped forward with what transpired this morning. He is, obviously, displeased that there is no repercussions for the Weasley brat. He asks that you stick close to Hermione over the next few weeks to ensure that Weasley is keeping his distance.

~ L. Malfoy

Draco folded the letter back up, his fingers tracing over his family seal. He wasn't sure what possessed him to disarm Weasley this morning. It was clear that Hermione was handling it, or perhaps her family pendant handled it, he was still unsure. What he did know was that Weasley was a complete idiot and that Potter had surprised him this morning. He knew Gryffindors were supposed to be loyal, but he had expected that Potter's loyalty would lie with Weasley. He stared down once more at the crest beneath his fingers before tossing the letter into the fire.

"Can you believe it?"

"What?" Draco asked Pansy.

"That the mudblood is His daughter!"

"Don't call her that." Draco said quickly.

"You honestly believe it?!"

"Don't you read Parkinson? Everything was published this morning, her inheritance went through from the Gaunts and her family tree was published. She's his and now, she's ours. Get yourself together before you introduce yourself."

"Granger." Draco said quietly as he approached her table in the library. She was, surprisingly, sitting alone, Potter having left her side for the first time over the last three days.

"Malfoy."

"I just wanted to let you know that, should you need anything, even a friendly ear, I'm here."

"Right."

"I'm serious Granger."

"Malfoy." She sighed, "you haven't had a friendly year the entire time we've been going to school, so please don't pretend like we're friends. I appreciate that you're trying to make it known you support my being who I am, but quite frankly I do not need or want your support."

He stood there, mouth opening and then closing, completely at a loss for words. "Well then, I'll just be going I guess."

"Have a good day."

"Yeah," he stuttered slightly, "you too."

She knocked on the door to the potions classroom before pushing it open slightly.

"Professor?" she called.

"What, Ms. Granger?"

"I was hoping you had a few moments?"

"Not particularly but I imagine my answer doesn't matter much. Sit." He said, indicating to the chair across his desk. She sat down and stared at the papers strewn across his desk, thinking to herself how odd, since he was one of her most organized Professors.

"Get on with it Granger."

"Well â€" Well," she started over again, "I was hoping you could speak to me about my Mother."

"What of her?"

"Who she was, what she was like, you know, about her."

"I'm unable to do that Granger, I did not know her well, in fact I only saw her a few times before the Dark Lord was gone."

"Oh." She said, her hands dropping slightly in disappointment. "Thank you then, Professor."

"Granger?"

"Yes?"

"Perhaps try speaking to Professor McGonagall."

"Did she teach her when she was at Hogwarts?" Hermione said perking up slightly, not stopping to consider her mother's age.

"Quite the contrary, Minerva and Carina Longbottom were best friends during and after their time in Hogwarts, some would even have considered them family from what I have been told."

Hermione stood there for a moment before saying her goodnight and heading quickly from the dungeons.

End
file.